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bare thought, but with pomp and color and circumstance, with the very mood and spirit of the author himself. Why should not similar study bring similar results when brought to bear on the lyrics, the dramas, the wisdom writings, the letters, the essays of the Bible? Books such as the one before us are not meant to substitute literature for religion. They merely open up fresh avenues to a real understanding of the Bible. What was before fragmentary has been seen as a whole. The imagination has been stirred to larger activity, the sense for beauty is awake, and the mind and heart combine in a new and warm realization of spiritual verities. M. R.

Recent Research in Bible Lands; its Progress and Results. Edited by HERMAN V. HILPRECHT. Philadelphia: John D. Wattles & Co. 1896. Pp. xiv + 269. With a map. Price \$1.50.

This book contains a series of articles¹ originally prepared for the *Sunday School Times* by a number of American and European specialists and edited by Professor Hilprecht of the University of Pennsylvania.

I. The most important for the layman—and they are all written for the layman rather than for the specialist—is the first, “Oriental Research and the Bible,” by Professor McCurdy. In a few pages he sums up the results obtained (1) from Egyptian literature and archæology (*cf.* the special chapter by Sayce); (2) from Arabic literature (*cf.* the special chapter by Hommel); (3) from excavations in the Holy Land (*cf.* the special chapter by Bliss); and (4) from Babylonian and Assyrian literature. We may pass over (2) and (3) and take McCurdy’s estimate of (1) and (4). Of the former he says (pp. 7, 8): “And yet it must be admitted that comparatively few results of first-class importance for biblical science have so far been achieved by Egyptology. Its value for Bible study is indeed great, but it is rather indirect than direct. Its discoveries and assured results are interesting and educative in the highest degree, but they have not as yet satisfied

¹ The table of contents is as follows: Oriental Research and the Bible (pp. 1–28), PROFESSOR J. F. MCCURDY, PH.D., LL.D.; The Mounds of Palestine (pp. 29–42), FREDERICK JONES BLISS, PH.D.; Explorations in Babylonia (pp. 43–94), PROFESSOR HERMAN V. HILPRECHT, PH.D., D.D.; Research in Egypt (pp. 95–128), PROFESSOR A. H. SAYCE, D.D., LL.D., D.C.L.; Discoveries and Researches in Arabia (pp. 129–158), PROFESSOR FRITZ HOMMEL, PH.D.; The Hittites (pp. 159–190), WILLIAM HAYES WARD, D.D., LL.D.; Early Greek Manuscripts from Egypt (pp. 191–226), PROFESSOR J. P. MAHAFFY, D.D., D.C.L.; New Light on the Book of Acts (pp. 227–242), PROFESSOR W. M. RAMSAY, LL.D., D.C.L.; Topical Index (pp. 245–266); Scriptural Index (p. 266); Chronological Index (pp. 267–269); Map.

the more sanguine expectations of earnest readers of the Bible. One may perhaps venture to say that such must continue to be the general character of the quest. It is apparently impossible that Egypt can ever be of primary importance in the department of biblical study." Of Assyria, on the other hand, he writes at great length: (1) of the land itself; (2) of the language and its importance for the study of the Hebrew; (3) of the "large and priceless literature;" (4) of the "most instructive disclosures." His treatment of the influence of Assyrio-Babylonian literature is full, conservative, and will meet with the favor of the specialist.

II. Bliss's account of the work done in Palestine is interesting. One could wish that larger and more tangible results had been obtained.

III. Hilprecht gives an interesting account (*a*) of some of the trials and tribulations of the American expedition to Babylonia, with an estimate of the value of the finds; (*b*) of the French excavations at Tello, with remarks on Babylonian chronology; and (*c*) of the Turkish efforts in Babylonian archæology, under the director-general, Hamdy Bey, of the Imperial Ottoman Museum in Constantinople. All scholars will welcome the history of the American expedition, by Dr. Peters and Mr. Haynes, promised on page 60. It may be in place here for me, as a member of this expedition, to say that too much credit cannot be given to Mr. Haynes, to whom most of the success of the expedition is due.

IV. It would have been better for the *Sunday School Times* to have had a specialist write the article on "Research in Egypt." Sayce has made his usual number of blunders, and this chapter is the least trustworthy of the series.

V. Hommel tells in a pleasing way of Glaser's travels and results. He is, however, too optimistic as to the present and future influence of the Arabic.

VI. Ward treats of the Hittites (*a*) in the Old Testament; (*b*) on the Egyptian monuments; (*c*) on the cuneiform monuments; and (*d*) on their own monuments; also of the race and of the writing and language. He differs from Hilprecht in his appreciation of Jensen's attempt to decipher the Hittite language. His subject is full of uncertainties, but he has given a fair statement of what we know and of what we do not know. I pass VII and VIII.

The work, as a whole, is well done. Great credit must be given these gentlemen for putting the latest results of scholarship in a scholarly but popular form for the use of the layman. As a rule, this work is attempted by those who are incompetent and is miserably done.

Only a scholar can sift the results of scholarship. May more scholars give some of their time and ability to work of this kind, and thus make unnecessary the worthless material which is imposed upon the public.

ROBERT FRANCIS HARPER.

Jesus Christ before his Ministry. By PROFESSOR EDMOND STAPFER, D.D. Translated by Louise Seymour Houghton. New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons. 1896. 12mo, pp. xvi+182. Price \$1.25.

Dr. Stapfer, Professor in the Faculty of Protestant Theology at Paris, has become quite well known in this country by his earlier volume on *Palestine in the Time of Christ*, which has gone through three editions, and, though often inaccurate in details and sometimes mistaken in view or judgment, is perhaps still the best popular work in English upon the subject. The small volume now to be noticed is the first installment of a still larger undertaking, for Dr. Stapfer's plan includes three volumes upon Jesus Christ: His Person, His Authority, His Work. The second volume, upon *Jesus Christ during his Ministry*, is just announced by the publishers; and the third volume, upon *The Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ*, is well on in the course of preparation.

There is not much direct information to be had about Jesus during the thirty years which preceded his public ministry—the period our volume treats. What direct information we have is recorded in the first two chapters of Matthew and the first two of Luke. And one might have supposed that a writer on this period of Jesus' life would have devoted his book mainly to a presentation of this material, subjecting it to historical and literary criticism, and then constructing a fragmentary biography from it. But Dr. Stapfer distinctly states in his preface that this is not the way he has chosen: "Of the time which passed over him until his thirtieth year we know only so much as the evangelists Matthew and Luke have preserved for us. But it is not from the facts which they bring to light that I shall draw the pages which follow. To their touching narratives of the childhood of Jesus it seems to me that there is nothing to add or to subtract." Nor even to repeat? Then we part company entirely with direct information about Jesus' first thirty years. But still the whole inquiry is about these years—whence shall the author derive his facts? Let him tell: "I would fain say what must have been the life of Jesus until his